

MY BOOK OF
**INDIAN
FESTIVALS**



MY BOOK OF INDIAN FESTIVALS

Written by — Jamila Q. Varawala

Designed and Illustrated by — Jenny Bhatt

MY BOOK OF INDIAN FESTIVALS

Dear Parents,

Festivals from a child's point of view, mean holidays, fun, feasts, presents, new clothes, dancing, singing, bursting crackers, rituals, blessings and happiness.

Surrounded by family and friends these become memorable moments leaving a lasting impression on their minds and creating a bond with the members of the family.

Rituals that are passed down through generations help create a sense of culture, heritage and tradition. This book is intended to equip the child with an essence of each festival. And an opportunity for parents to sit and participate with some thing special for every festival.

India is the land of most festivals. More than 500 festivals in 365 days are celebrated in different parts of India at different times.

Festivals revolve around events like the changing of the season, (harvesting and sowing), commemorating an event, legend or history, births of prophets, or invoking the blessings of the Gods and Goddesses. This book includes the time, rituals, foods, festivities and events of each of these festivals.

Most of the words used here are of common usage in everyday Indian language.

Do help the child to understand and get to know more about the festivals. Some of the festivals have such intriguing stories, that it would need volumes of text.

Festivals play an important part in the social bonding of Indians all over the world and develop a sense of national integration.

The things to do section, needs the involvement of parents. Do help your child to gather more information and create an interest in Indian festivals.



CONTENTS

MAKAR SANKRANTI

REPUBLIC DAY

HOLI

BAISAKHI

BUDDHA PURNIMA

RATH YATRA

PATETI

RAKSHA BANDHAN

INDEPENDENCE DAY

JANAMASHTAMI

GANESH CHATURTHI

ONAM

DURGA PUJA

NAVARATRI

DUSSEHRA

DIWALI

IDD

CHRISTMAS

MAKAR SANKRANTI

Kites fluttering in the skies, bullfights and bonfires.

Makar Sankranti always falls on the 14th of January. Since it is a solar event this festival matches the English calendar.

On this day, the sun travels from the Tropic of Cancer to the Tropic of Capricorn. This movement of the sun is called Uttarayana and it is considered an auspicious time.

Around this time, on the 13th of January, Punjabis celebrate Lohri with a huge bonfire and offer rice and sweets, while the Tamilians celebrate Pongal by making different types of rice preparations. Uttarayana also marks the change of winds. In Gujarat the skies are filled with colourful kites. The rooftops and terraces are filled with the young and old participating in kite flying competitions. When a kite is cut, loud cheers fill the air.



This festival falls during winter. The feast includes milk, jowar, jaggery and til ladoos made from pure ghee to produce heat and keeps the body healthy throughout the winter.

Makar
when people
daan (charity).
sharing and
others.

During
is an event the
Decorated bulls with
wild through the crowds, while young men try to capture the
bulls and be declared heroes for the day.



Sankranti is a festival
give grain as
This symbolises
goodwill towards

Pongal, bull fighting
youngsters enjoy.
bells on their horns run

THINGS TO DO

Make your own kite.

Find out about different kinds of kites in other parts of the world e.g. China.



REPUBLIC DAY

Pomp, pageantry and parades.

The Indian Republic Day falls on 26th January and is a national holiday.

Three years after Independence, India was declared a Democratic Republic. This means that the people of India started governing themselves according to the constitution written by the constituent assembly.



Delhi, the capital city is abuzz with activity. Early in the morning people line up along the Rajpath road to witness the Republic Day Parade. The President of India takes the salute of the march past at Rajpath and the parade goes by India Gate.

Low flying helicopters shower petals on the visitors. Then come the marching battalions of jawans in their smart uniforms. The armed forces, the border security forces, the coast guard, the airforce with their majestic fighter planes, the heavy armoured tanks and weaponry, are on display. The parade by units of the three forces is followed by tableaux from all the states of India.

Each state
folk dancers to
part in the parade.
orange, white and
balloons are
air. On this day,
are awarded to the
well as to the



sends its best
perform and take
In the end
green coloured
released in the
bravery medals
armed forces as
civilians.

THINGS TO DO

If you are not in Delhi, make it a point to watch the Republic Day Parade on television, you will learn a lot about India.

Find out about the different medals awarded in India. e.g. Bharat Ratna, the Vir Chakra, etc.



H O L I

Gay, boisterous and colourful.

Holi is celebrated on the full moon day in the month of Phalgun (February-March) and welcomes Vasant Ritu (spring) when flowers of various colours are in full bloom.



According to legend, the demon king Hiranyakshyap hated his son Prahlad, who was a devotee of Lord Vishnu. When Hiranyakshyap failed in his attempts to kill his son, he asked his sister Holika who could not be burnt by fire to sit with Prahlad on a burning pyre. But Prahlad emerged safe while Holika was burnt to death. To symbolise the burning of the evil Holika, a huge bonfire is lit, the day before Holi.



Another version attributes Holi as a festival of Lord Krishna who used to play pranks with the gopis (milk maids) by showering them with flowers from trees like Kesariya and Tesu (Flame of the Forest). That is how the ritual of playing with colour originated, and to this date, people throw coloured water and gulal on each other. Eating mithai, drinking thandai, frolicking and dancing is part and parcel of this colourful festival also known as Rangpanchmi in certain parts of the country.



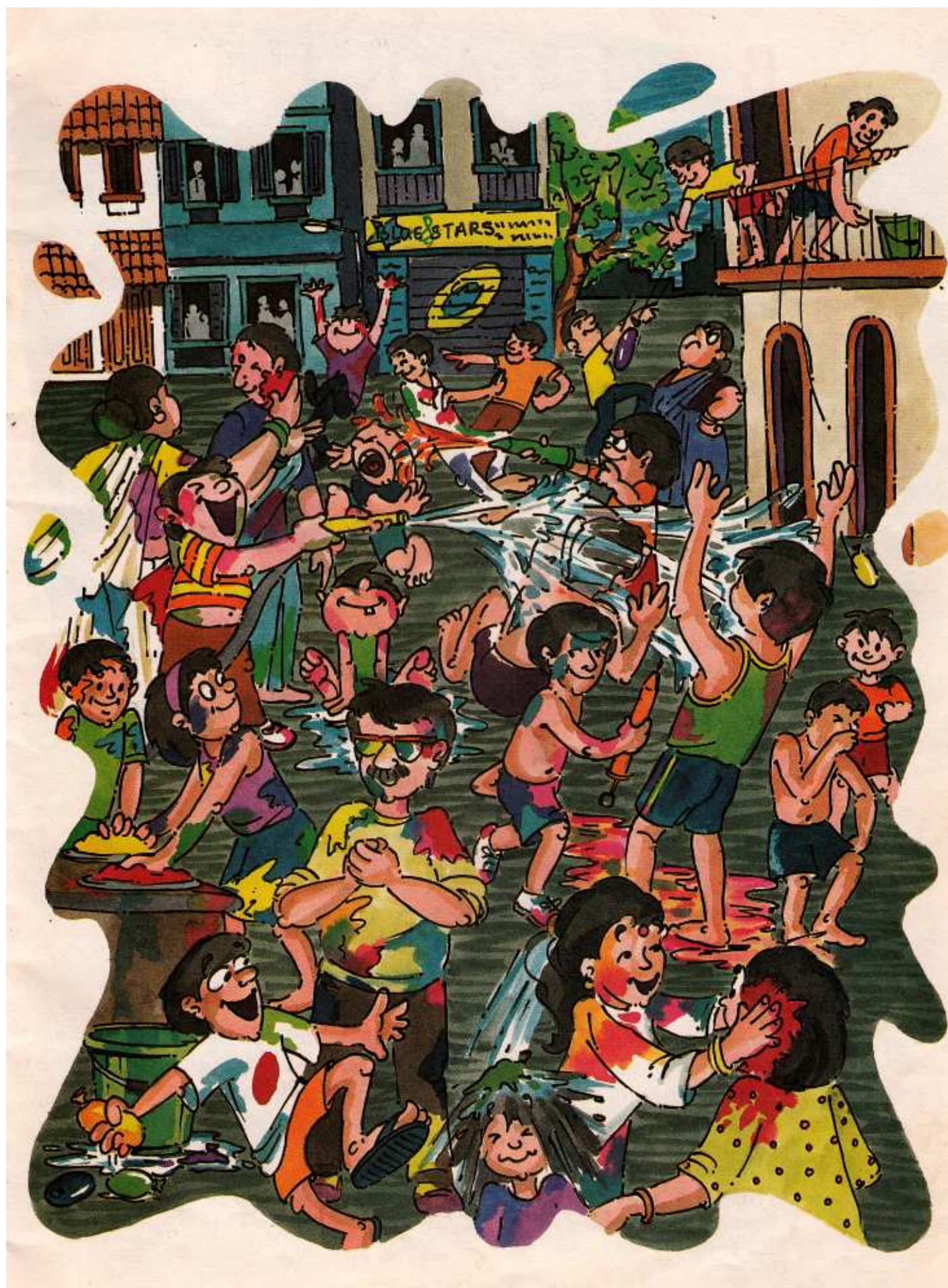
Til ladoos, gujjias, puranpolis, sanjoris, papri and kanji ke bade are the special eatables prepared for Holi.



THINGS TO DO

Make environment friendly colours of vegetable dyes.

Make til ladoos with help from your mother.



B A I S A K H I

Heady beat of dholaks and boisterous bhangra usher in an abundant harvest.

Baisakhi is the harvest festival of North India, celebrating the bounty of the winter or rabi crop.

It is celebrated in the month of April and falls in the Hindu month of Vaishakh.

To the sturdy, hardworking Sikhs this festival also marks the anniversary of Khalsa founded by Guru Gobind Singh. On this day he chose his five devoted leaders Panj Piyare, and established the five Ks of Sikhism - kachha - shorts, kesh - long hair, kargha - small comb, kirpan - a kind of dagger and kada - iron bangle.



Early morning after nahan (bath), the Sikhs visit the Gurdwara to offer mithai and thaar (charity) as thanksgiving for their good fortune. Reading from the Guru Granth Sahib the Holy Scriptures of the Sikhs is followed by a procession. There is feasting, merry making and gaiety at the Baisakhi Da Mela. These melas are fairs where the young and old dressed in brightly coloured clothes enjoy the merry-go-rounds, giant wheels, wooden and clay toys and shiny colourful bangles.

Mithai, bhaturas, sarson ka and frothy lassi are dishes prepared



chaats, channa saag, makkai ki roti some of the special on this day.

Men in sequinned jackets dance the traditional bhangra (folk dance) to the beat of the dholak. The women perform the graceful gidda in colourful lehengas (long ghagras). The most famous gurdwara in India, the Golden Temple at Amritsar is beautifully illuminated on this day.

THINGS TO DO

Try to do the bhangra.

Learn more about the city of Amritsar.



B U D D H A P U R N I M A

Robed monks, serenity and calm mark the birthday of Buddha, the enlightened one.

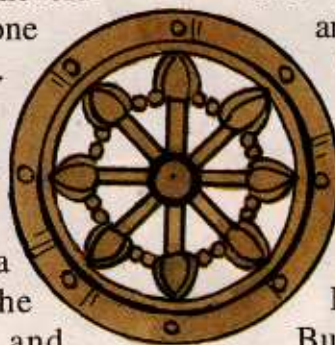
Buddha Purnima falls in the month of Vaishakh on a full moon day (April).

Gautam Buddha was born to King Sudhadhana and Queen Mahamaya, on this day in Lumbini in Nepal and was named Siddhartha.

Buddha means the wise or enlightened one. In Buddhist temples, children line up and pay homage to the idol of Buddha. The altar is covered with flowers. This day is also known as Flower Day in Japan, because the cherry trees bloom here in April.



Buddhism began in India about 2500 years ago. It grew and spread and today there are three hundred million Buddhists all over the world, following the simple teachings of Buddha. This religion spread into China, Tibet, Sri Lanka and Japan, but nearly disappeared from its homeland India. Though Gautama Buddha was born in a royal family, he was moved by the misery of the old and the poor. He renounced the throne and wandered till he came to Gaya. There during meditation under a Bodhi tree, he attained Nirvana on a full moon night in the month of Vaishakh.



Gaya is a sacred place for Buddhists. The Bodhi tree is honoured and Buddhist monks in simple orange robes and shaved heads chant prayers. The ceremonies are simple.

Kheer is prepared and served to everybody and in the night bamboo lanterns are lit.

THINGS TO DO

Read the Jataka stories.

Visit a Buddhist monastery.



RATH YATRA

How much strength will you need to pull a chariot that is as tall as a four storied building? And suppose you had to pull three of them?

Lord Jagannath's Rath Yatra has been celebrated for more than 800 years and occurs before the monsoons in the Hindu month of Ashada (June-July) and lasts for about a week.

The town of Puri in the state of Orissa is one of the dhamas (pilgrimage place) as it is the abode of Jagannath the Lord of the Universe. In fact the English word juggernaut originated from this festival because of the gigantic scale of its chariots and the mass celebrations.

Rath means a chariot and yatra means a journey and during this festival Lord Jagannath goes on a chariot journey with his brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra. Three monumental chariots of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra are taken out in an elaborate procession along the streets of Puri to their aunt's temple three kilometres away. The three idols are made of neemwood and have beautifully painted faces.

Lord Jagannath's chariot is the largest with 16 wheels. Balabhadra's has 14 wheels while Subhadra's has 12 wheels and they all rise to about forty to forty-five feet. The massive canopies of the chariots are festooned with shimmering silk and satin applique flowers in distinctive colours of red, yellow and blue.

Millions of devotees pull the chariots with huge ropes as it is believed that pulling the sacred ropes of the Rath assures salvation. The yatra takes more than 12 hours to cover the short distance because the Rath moves very slowly.

THINGS TO DO

Make a mask with big eyes.

Learn more about the town of Puri.





P A T E T I

Everyone of us has at least one Parsi friend who is kind, gentle and fun loving. Good thoughts, good deeds, and charity are the pillars of Zoroastrianism, the faith Parsis follow.

Pateti is a festival of the Parsis and marks the beginning of the New Year of the Zoroastrian calendar.

The Parsis worship Ahura Mazda, symbolised by fire. The Agiary is their place of worship. It is also known as the fire temple because the sacred fire which was brought from Iran is always kept burning by the dastoor (high priest) of the temple.



On Pateti day, Parsis don their kusti (sacred vest), dress up in new clothes—women in heirloom gara sarees, men in duglees and visit the agiary. Here jashan (puja) is performed and sandalwood is offered to the fire.



Houses are cleaned and decorated with flowers, the entrance is adorned with flower torans and rangolis in patterns of fish, birds, butterflies and geometrical shapes. Since the fish is considered to be an auspicious motif, Parsis exchange fish-shaped sweets or chocolates on this day.

Being very fond of a special significance for machhi (fish wrapped in (boneless meat with falooda, mawa ni yummy dishes this day. feasting friends and



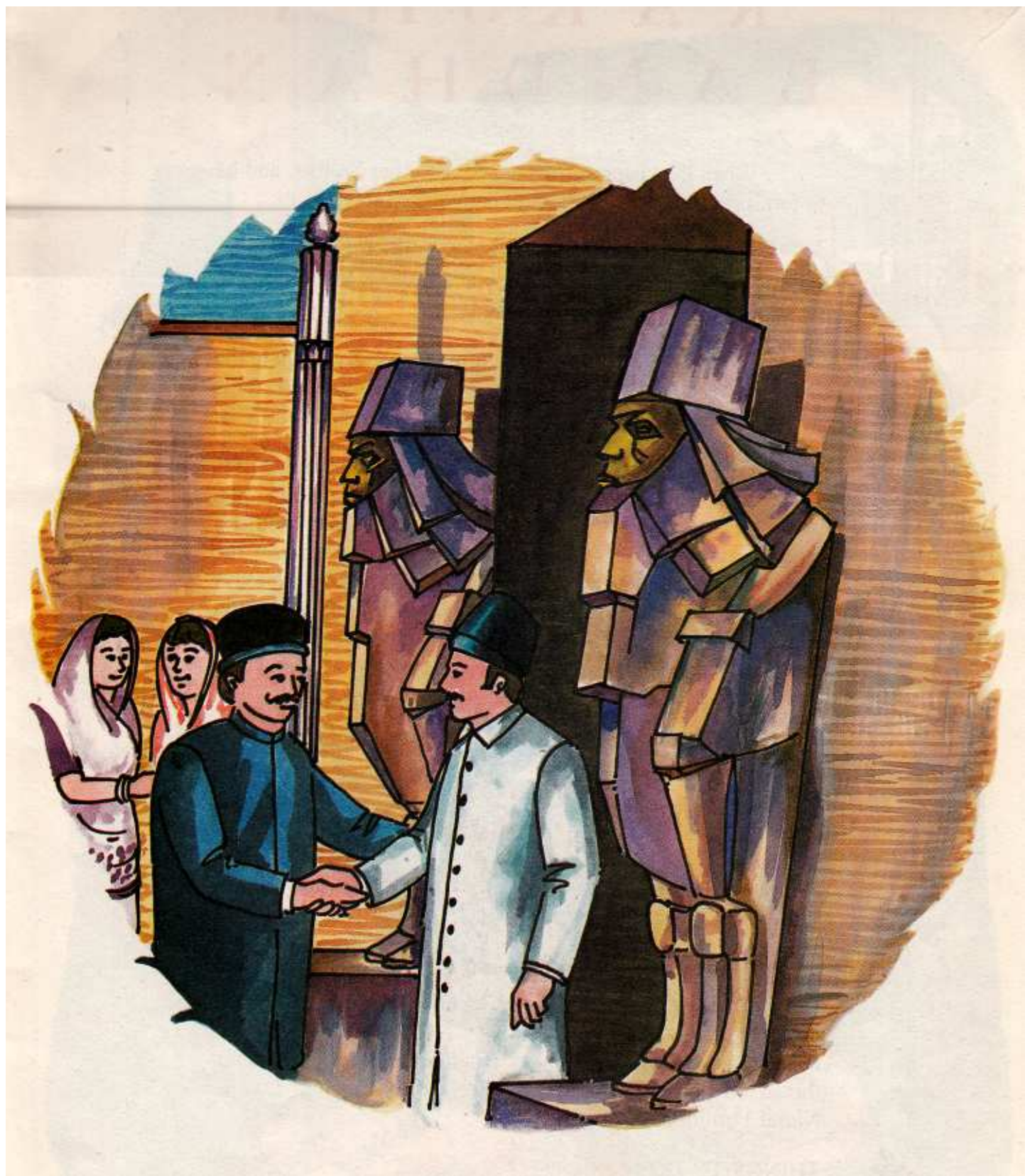
food, mealtimes assume Parsis on Pateti. Patra ni banana leaves), sali boti potato chips), rava, boi are some of the served on Besides and meeting relatives,

attending musical concerts and plays is quite a ritual in the urban cities.

THINGS TO DO

Wish your Parsi friends Pateti Mubarak.

Make chocolates in fish moulds.



RAKSHA BANDHAN

When the sister affirms her love for her brother, and he in turn promises to protect and cherish her forever.

Raksha Bandhan falls in the months of Shravan on its full moon day, in the month of July and August. Raksha means protection and Bandhan a bond or tie.

This is an emotional and sentimental festival where the sister ties a silken thread on her brother's right wrist. This thread serves as an amulet guarding the bearer from all evils.

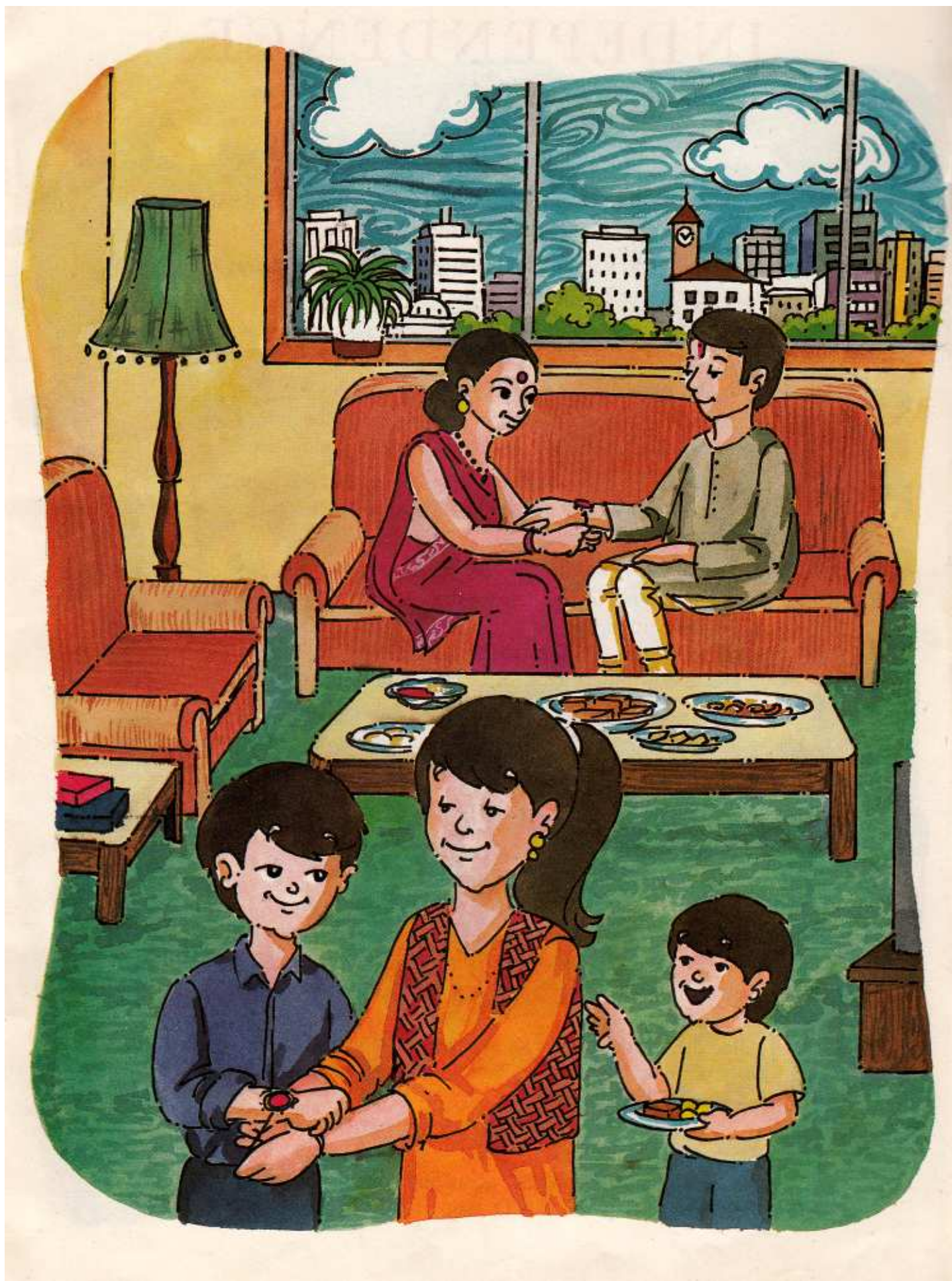
Early morning on Raksha Bandhan, the sister prepares a thali containing rice, the rakhi, coconut and mithai. She performs arti and applies teeka with rice on her brother's forehead and offers him mithai. In a symbolic gesture the brother gives a gift or cash pledging eternal protection. Days prior to this, shops are filled with colourful rakhis in silk, cotton or zari threads with sequinned or embroidered motifs. Brothers staying far away, receive their rakhis by post from their sisters.

It is an honour to receive a rakhi and it is the responsibility of the receiver to protect. An example, which crossed all barriers of religion, was when the widowed Queen of Chittor sent a rakhi to the Mughal Emperor Humayun, seeking protection for herself and her kingdom. Emperor Humayun immediately sent his armed forces for the Queen's protection, respecting the bond of the rakhi. Brahmins change their sacred thread on this day. The day is also called Coconut Day or Narial Purnima.



THINGS TO DO

Make your own rakhi.



INDEPENDENCE DAY

Tricolour fluttering proudly, National Anthem sung with fervour and we know we're proud to be Indians.

August 15, 1947, is a memorable day in the history of India as it gained its freedom after a long struggle.

The uniqueness of our Independence struggle was that it was non-violent.

To force the British to quit India, Gandhiji launched the non-cooperation movement, the civil disobedience movement, the Quit India movement and undertook the Dandi march.

The British eventually accepted defeat and this signalled the end of India's colonialism. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru became our first Prime Minister.

In his memorable speech at the Red Fort, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru unfurled the Indian tricolour filling the hearts of Indians with hope and pride for a new India. It is not only a day to rejoice, but also a day to remember all the martyrs who laid down their lives for the freedom of the country.

This national event is celebrated throughout the country with the hoisting of the Indian flag and singing of the National Anthem and other patriotic songs. Indians abroad also gather together to pay respect to the Indian flag.

In New
gather in
on the
the Red Fort,
P r i m e
speech. A guard
presented to the

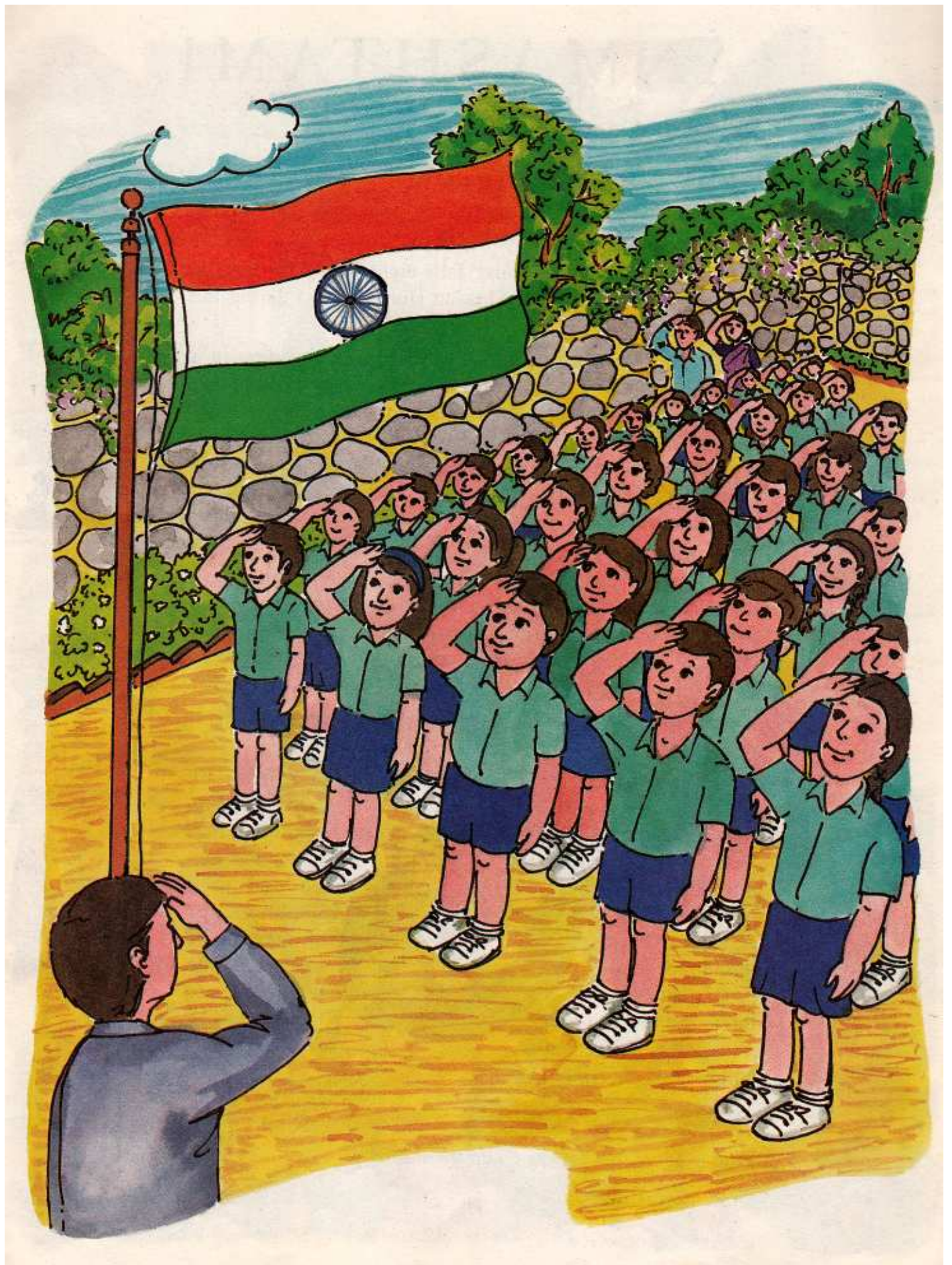
After the Prime Minister's speech, the National Anthem is sung. Similar functions are held in all parts of India.

THINGS TO DO

Make your own flag.

Find out about flags. When, where and how they are used, eg., the Olympic flag, the U.N.O. flag.





JANMASHTAMI

Human pyramids try to break pots of butter even as they slip and fall, till they succeed.

Lord Krishna's birthday falls eight days after Raksha Bandhan, in the month of Shravan (July-August) during the monsoon.

Lord Krishna was born to Devaki and Vasudeva in a prison at Mathura. King Kans the brother of Devaki had imprisoned them because it was predicted that the eighth child of Devaki would kill him. But Vasudeva succeeded in taking Lord Krishna away from the prison on a stormy night across the Yamuna to Gokul. Lord Krishna grew up in the care of Yashoda and Nand.

Raas Leela performances replay incidents of his bravery as well as his mischief. On Janmashtami, temples are lit, a silver cradle is decorated and an idol of Lord Krishna is placed within and artis are performed. Singing of bhajans goes on till midnight, the time Lord Krishna was born. Some people keep a fast till midnight.

Prasad — fruits, kheer, puri and potato bhaji is distributed.

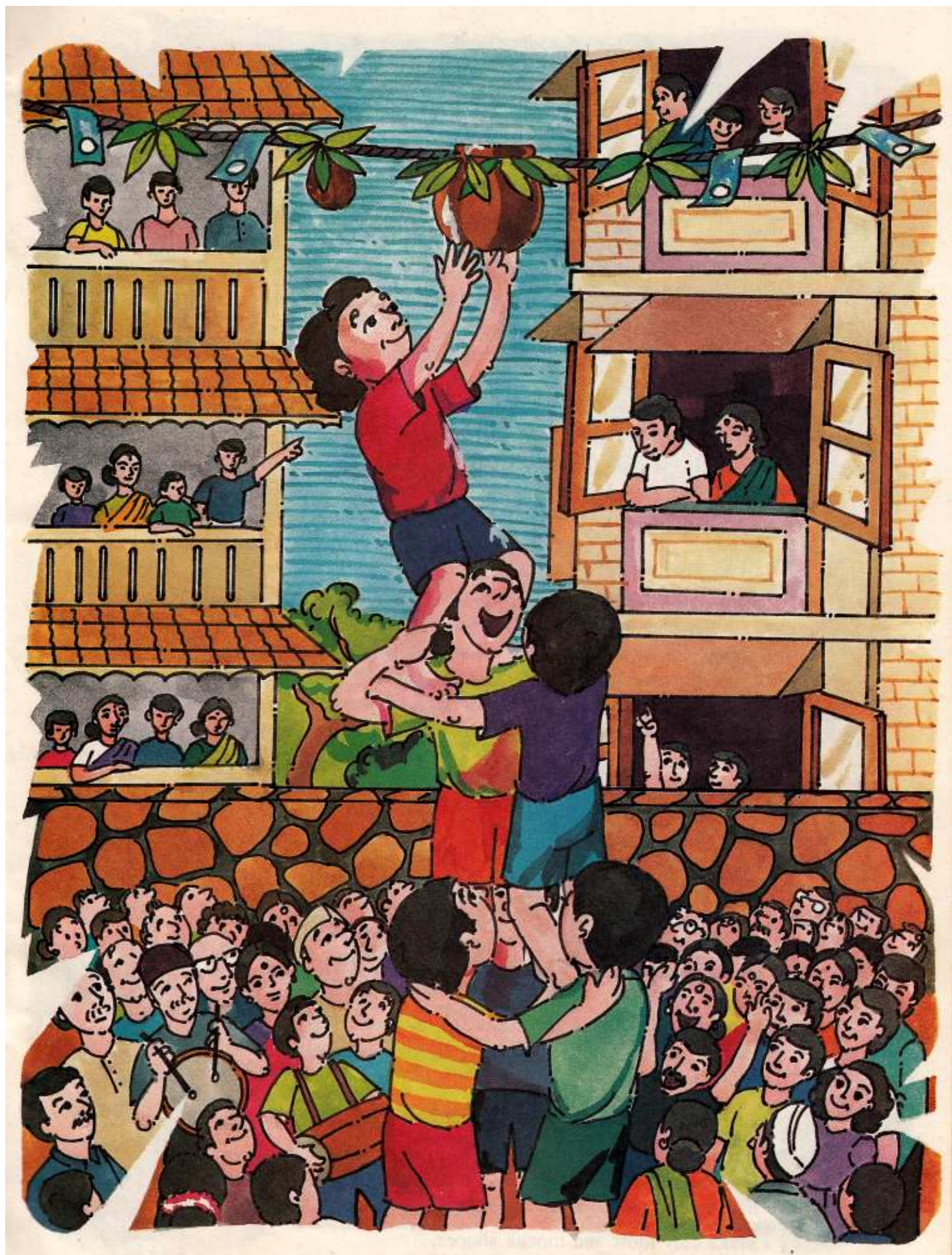
In Maharashtra, Janmashtami is celebrated by enacting the pranks of Lord Krishna stealing the butter from earthen pots. People of that area tie earthen pots filled with ghee and dahi between buildings, in compounds of men make human pyramids to reach the pot. Buckets of water are thrown at them to foil their attempts. The pot is broken after several attempts amidst loud cheering.

THINGS TO DO

Find out how butter was made traditionally.

Draw Lord Krishna.





GANESH CHATURATHI

You love Ganpati don't you? Who doesn't. After all which other God is elephant headed, loves sweets and rides on a little mouse? And is clever and smart as well!

I'm sure you know that Ganesh has a festival all to himself. Ganesh Chaturthi comes in the Hindu month of Bhadrapad, i.e., the beginning of September and lasts for 10 days.

The festival is celebrated all over India, but in Maharashtra it's celebrated with a special excitement.

He is the God of wisdom and prosperity and remover of all obstacles. In his four hands he holds a chakra (wheel), shell, lotus and mace. Earlier this festival was purely celebrated at home, till Bal Gangadhar Tilak made it into a community affair where rich or poor could worship alike. That's when it came to be known as the Sarvajanik (community) Ganeshutsav.

A clay idol of Ganesh is brought home and worshipped. This could be from one and a half days to a maximum of 10 days. Puja and arti is performed for him every day and since Ganesh is the elephant god, durva (stalks of grass) and garlands of bright red shoeflowers are part of the offerings.

Ganesh loves sweets and offerings of modaks, ladoos and other mithais are made to please him. Panchamrit (milk, curd, ghee, sugar and honey) is another favourite of Lord Ganesh.

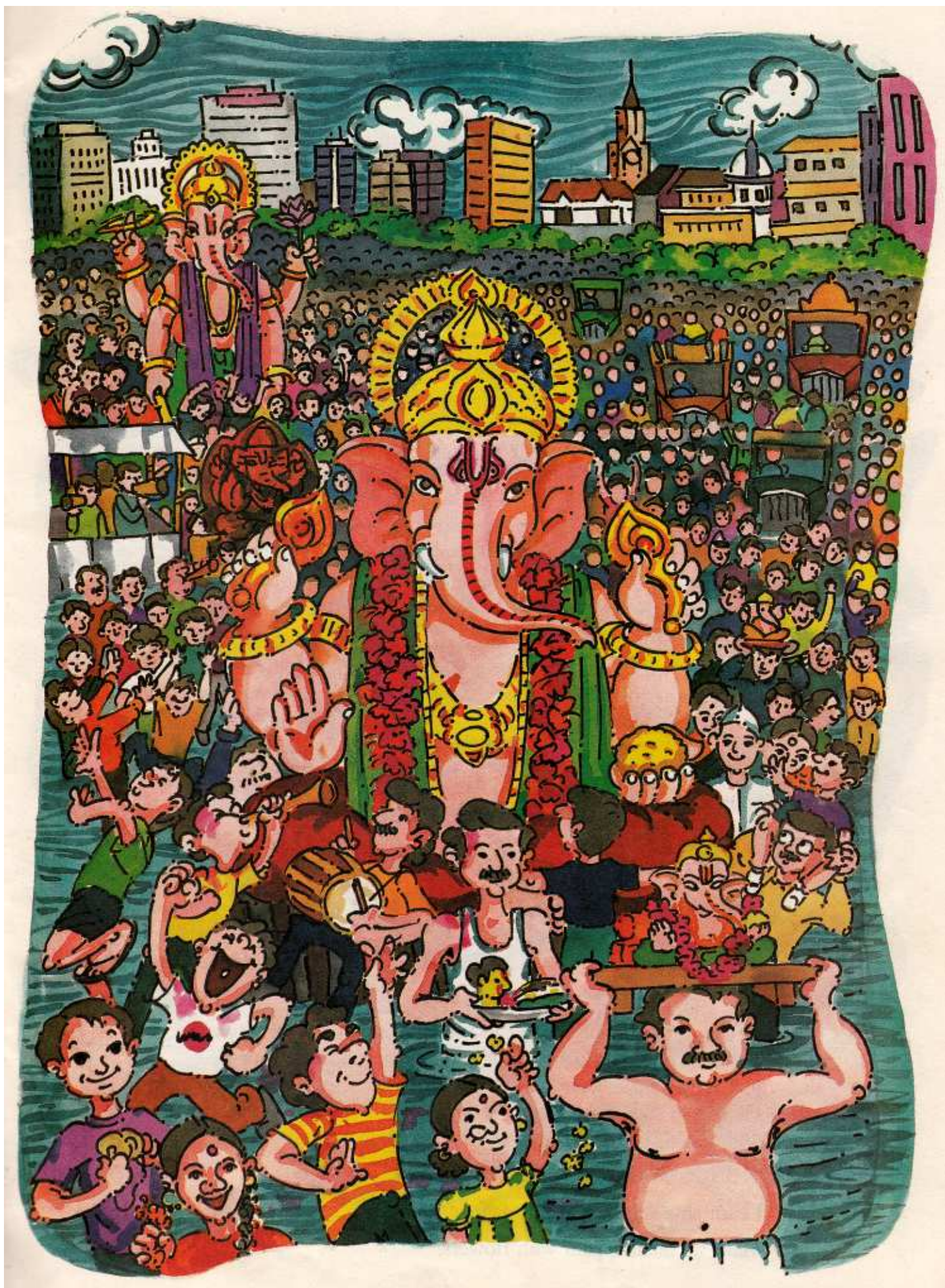
And then it's time for his immersion. He's seen off in style with the clashing of cymbals and beating of drums to the loud cries of Ganpati Bappa Morya Pudchya Varshi Lavkar Ya, (please come early next year).

THINGS TO DO

There are so many interesting stories connected with Ganpati. Do you know how he got his elephant head or why he has a half broken tooth? Find out other Ganpati stories.

Make clay idols and modak shapes.





O N A M

Gaiety, merry making and feasting assure King Mahabali that all's well in his land-Kerala.

In the month of Shravan (August — September) after the monsoon when the land is lush green, Onam the state festival of Kerala is celebrated for ten days by everyone.

The legend has it that the powerful demon king Mahabali was greatly loved by his people. He was able and just and would fulfil the wishes of his subjects. The Gods fearing his growing might, asked Lord Vishnu's help. Vishnu took the form of a child and asked Mahabali for land equal to his three footsteps. True to his word the king granted the boon. Lord Vishnu grew in size and conquered all the worlds, and sent Mahabali to patal. Before that, the king requested Lord Vishnu to let him visit his people on earth once a year. Onam is believed to be the day Mahabali returns.

To welcome him to his land, houses are cleaned and everyone wears new clothes and gold ornaments. Children prepare a ten-tier flower decoration called onathappam. One tier for each of the ten days. Coconut leaves, coir and cane decorations are hung at the entrances of homes.

An Onam feast is traditionally served on banana leaves and includes delicacies like r a s a m , payasam, avial and kootu.



Onam feast served on banana leaves and includes delicacies like r a s a m , payasam, avial and kootu.

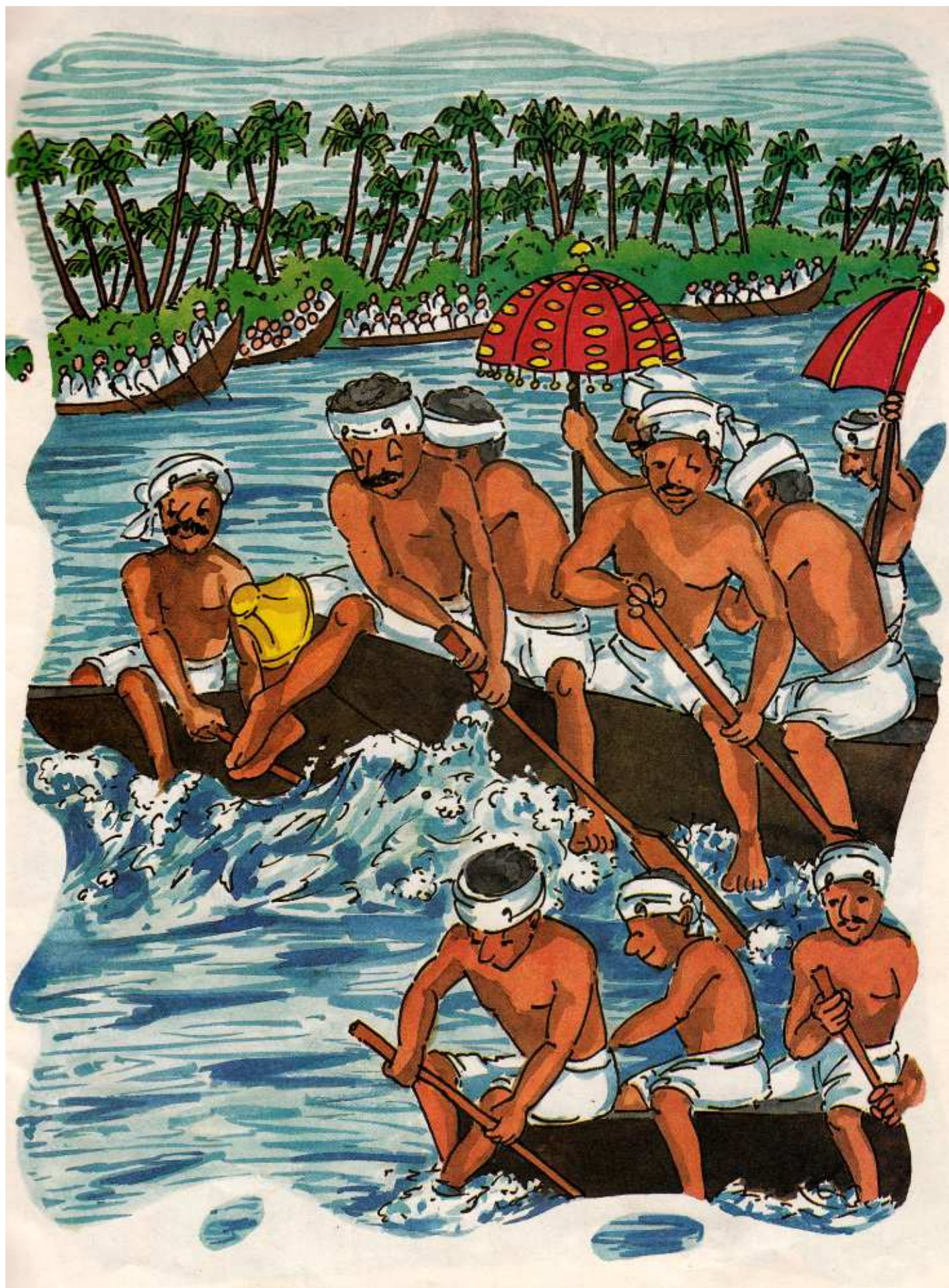
Onam cannot be complete without the snake boat regatta. A pageant of dancers, musicians, and folk artistes appear in a procession on boats and barges. In the end, hundred feet long snake boats called chundan participate in a race. Each boat has more than 120 men rowing to the rhythm of drums and cymbals. Kathakali is performed at night.

THINGS TO DO

Learn about the Kathakali dance.

Make an onathappam with flowers.





DURGA PUJA

Sitting astride a lion, with an evil demon at her feet, she is Durga, the Goddess of strength. Durga Puja is celebrated all over India in different forms. It is a very significant festival in Bengal, performed with lots of enthusiasm and zeal.

It is celebrated on the first night of the Hindu month Ashwin (September-October).

Durga is the Goddess of Shakti (strength). Her other name is Parvati. A powerful Goddess with ten arms holding weapons, Durga sits on a lion. Symbolising the victory of good over evil, she killed Mahishasura with her long trident (spear). Durga Puja has over the years evolved into a community celebration. Everyone contributes to the community puja. Huge pandals with idols of Durga are decorated for nine days. The decorations are intricate and artistic. The idol is made of clay and hay. The eyes are painted last, so as to breathe life into the idol.

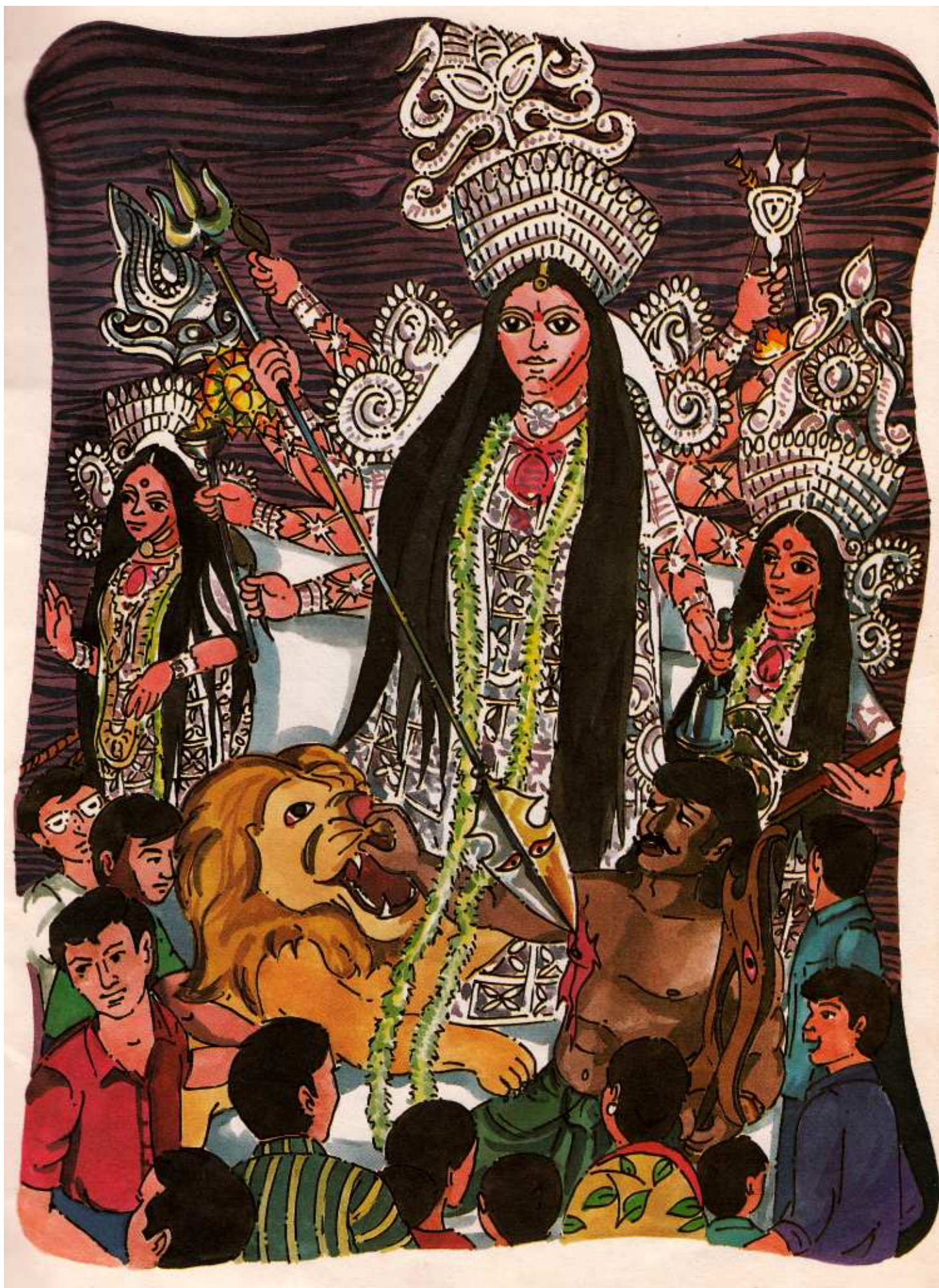
Arti is performed in the morning and evening to the sound of tinkling bells. Prasad of black channa, puri halwa and fruits is served. On the tenth day, known as Dashmi, the idol is taken in a long procession. Married women apply sindoor to the idol and bid her farewell as she's taken to be immersed in the Hooghly River or the sea. The sound of conch shells and bells accompany her. During Durga Puja there are performances of music, dance and plays, making this festival a cultural event. Famous Bengali sweets, like rossogolla, mishti doi and sandesh are prepared.

THINGS TO DO

Find out more about the city of Calcutta.

Who was the literature noble prize winner from West Bengal?





NAVARATRI

Swirling ghagras, all-night garbas and dandiya raas.

Navaratri (nine nights) is celebrated in the month of Ashwin (September-October).

Durga the Goddess of Shakti (strength) is worshipped and the devotees ask for her protection. Her other form is Amba Mata or mother earth. An earthen pot filled with water and a silver coin symbolises her. The mouth of the pot is covered with a coconut surrounded by the leaves of the Ashoka tree.

In Gujarat, Navaratri is a festival of gaiety and excitement. Women prepare earthen pots with various pulses and then worship the sprouts for nine days. The temples are decorated and illuminated during this period.



Every evening the women gather in open spaces or courtyards and dance the garba in big circles to the tune of folk songs and the rhythmic clapping of the hands. In the centre of the circle a pot with holes and a burning lamp called Garbo or Garba Deep is placed. It is a feast for the eyes to watch the brightly coloured ethnic ghagras swirling around with the graceful movement of the body.

The younger generation participates in the dandiya raas, which is danced with a decorated pair of sticks called dandiya. The beat of the music becomes faster and the dancing more frenzied as the night wears on. The dance usually continues till the wee hours of the morning.



In South India, houses display Navaratri Kolu. Colourful dolls are placed in rows on decorated tiers. Women and children go visiting to pay respect to each others kolu.

THINGS TO DO

Decorate your own pair of dandiya.

Learn the steps for the garba and dandiya raas.



DUSSEHRA

Effigies of Ravan burning in a spectacular display of fireworks while crowds dance to the chanting of 'Ramchandra Ki Jai.'



Dussehra is celebrated in the Hindu month of Ashwin, and lasts for ten days. Simultaneously, in North India, it is called Vijaya Dashami, in Bengal it is called Durga Puja while in Gujarat it is called Navratri, or the festival of nine nights.

Dussehra is celebrated all over India as a symbol of the victory of good over evil.

This day marks the triumph of Lord Rama over the mighty Ravana, who had abducted Sita to his kingdom of Lanka. Lord Rama with the help of his brother Laxman and Hanuman rescued Sita after a long battle in which the island of Lanka was burnt to ashes.

Melas are set up where Ram Leela is performed and children can buy toy bows and arrows. In Ram Leela the story of Rama is read and enacted for nine days. Hanuman with his long tail burning Lanka is the children's favourite.

On the tenth day, colossal effigies of Ravana with ten heads, his brother Kumbhakarna and son Meghnad are stuffed with fire crackers and shot with arrows of fire. These effigies explode into a spectacular sight while shouts of 'Ramchandra Ki Jai' fill the night.

On the Dussehra day the Pandavas after a long exile took up their weapons (hidden in the Shami tree) to fight the Kauravas.



Thus all instruments — pens, pencils, knives are worshipped on this day, because they are the means to fight injustice, ignorance and evil. Objects that are used for progress and prosperity like cars, trucks, machinery, etc. are worshipped too. Leaves of the Shami tree are distributed as symbols of God and goodwill.

THINGS TO DO

Make papier maché puppets.

Find out more about the Shami tree and its leaves.





DIWALI OR DEEPAWALI

Children love Diwali — the festival of lights. After all it means long holidays, new clothes and not to forget — crackers.

It is celebrated to commemorate the return of Lord Rama, Sita and Laxman after a 14 year exile.

Diwali falls on the fifteenth day of the Hindu month Kartik (October - November) and is celebrated all over India.

In Bengal, Kali, the Goddess of strength is worshipped. The first day of Diwali is called Dhanteras. It is auspicious to buy gold on this day. The next day is Chaturdashi when Laxmi, the Goddess of wealth and prosperity, symbolised by a gold coin is worshipped.

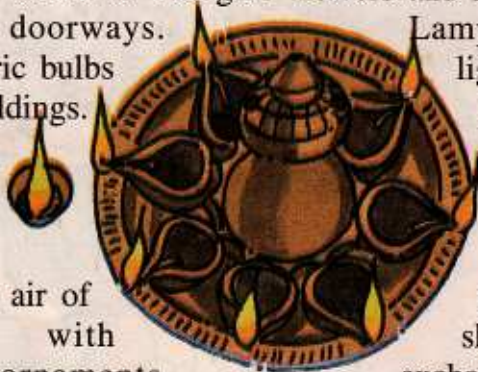
Diwali is the festival of the trading class as it is also the new business year and on this day Chopda (account books) Pujan is performed. Bhai Dooj is one of the last of the series of Diwali festivals where the sisters invite their brothers for a feast. Children in India look forward to a long Diwali vacation. Houses are spring-cleaned and painted. Rangolis decorate the entrances, torans of marigold flowers and mango leaves are hung on doorways. Lamps and rows of tiny electric bulbs light up homes and public buildings. At some places lamps are set afloat in rivers creating a magical effect.

An air of festivity fills the days with shopping for new clothes, ornaments, exchanging of sweets, dry fruits and gifts, and the bursting and display of firecrackers.

THINGS TO DO

Make your own diyas.

With the help of dots make different rangoli patterns.





IDD-UL-FITR

Streets come alive at night with vendors selling steaming kababs, cold firnis and tandoori parathas to the hungry devout who have fasted the whole day.

The Islamic calendar has 354 days instead of 365 days.

This difference causes Idd to fall on any English calendar month. Idd marks the end of the month of Ramzan according to the Islamic calendar.

In this month the Holy book of Quran was revealed to Prophet Mohammad.

During Ramzan, Muslims fast every day from sunrise to sunset. No food or water is allowed during that period and prayers are offered.

After sunset, they break their fast (Roza) with Iftaar - eating fruits, dates and kababs. During the night there is feasting with biryanis, kulfis, firnis and other rich foods. The fast begins in the morning again.

After 30 days of fasting, at the sight of the thin crescent new moon Idd is celebrated.

In the morning, community prayers - namaz - are offered in mosques where the men pray in neat rows with covered heads. They embrace each other and exchange Idd Mubarak greetings.

Children visit their elders, in turn give their or presents wearing new clothes, uncles and aunts who blessings with money called iddi.

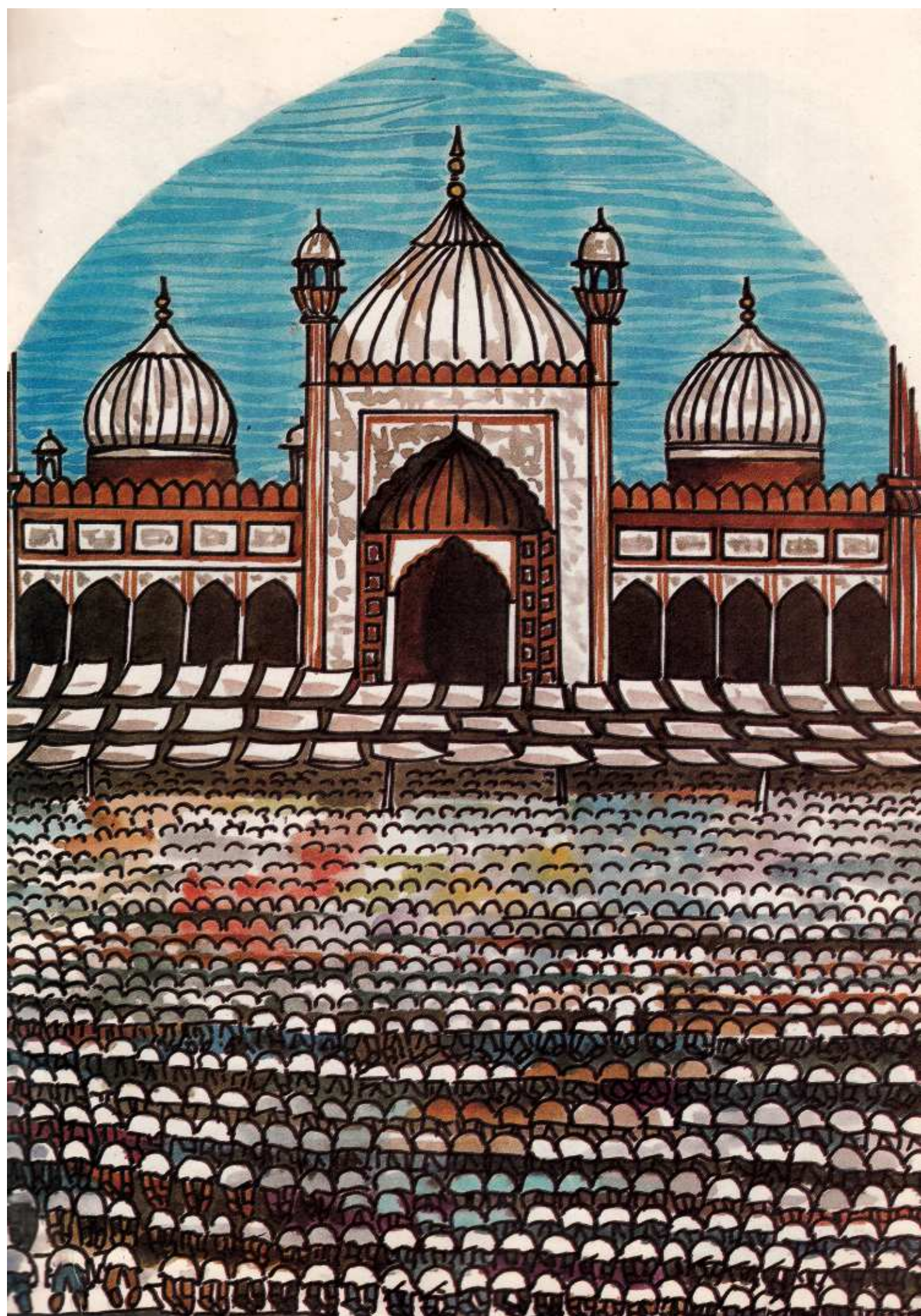
A rich sev and dry fruits preparation of milk, called shirkhurma is served to the guests. In this month, Muslims give zakkat i.e. alms and charity to the needy.

THINGS TO DO

Greet your Muslim friends Idd Mubarak.

Find out about Arabic calligraphy.





CHRISTMAS

Stockings filled with presents, Christmas trees all lit up with coloured lights and silver stars, Santa Claus and lots and lots of food to eat.



Christmas, the day Mother Mary gave birth to Lord Jesus Christ is celebrated on December 25 and the day before, is called Christmas Eve.

Guided by starlight, angels came to announce the birth of the divine baby. Three wise men came to worship the infant with offerings of gold, frankincense and myrrh.



Christmas is celebrated all over the world. Christians go to the church for midnight mass, children sing carols. In India, carols are sung in different local languages. The best-loved person is Saint Nicolas or Santa Claus who leaves behind presents for children.

The family spirit is celebrated with a grand Christmas feast — roast turkey, plum pudding, cakes and wine.



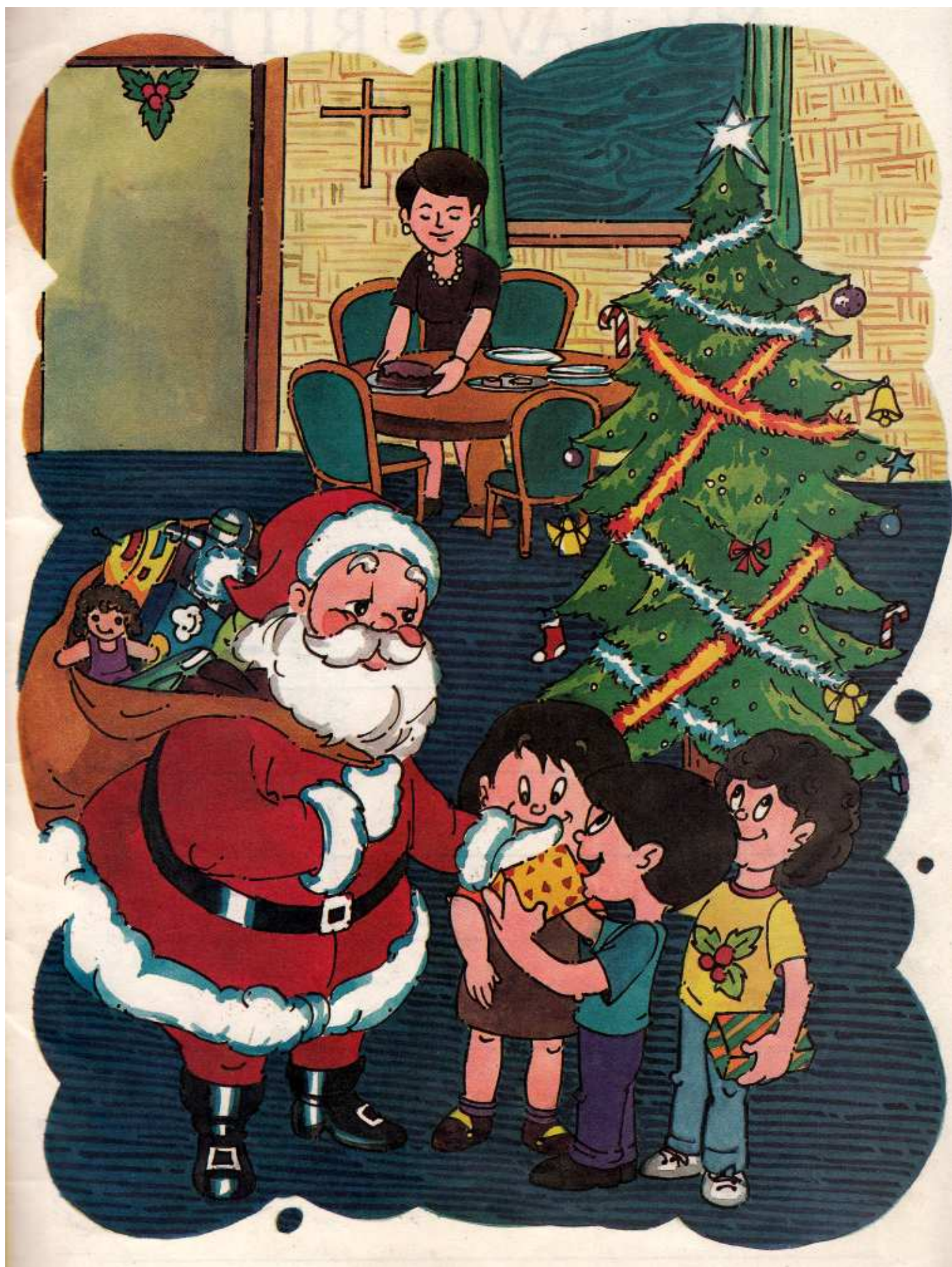
festivities on till New Year with dancing, merry making till the wee hours of the morning.

THINGS TO DO

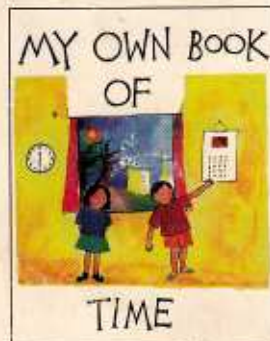
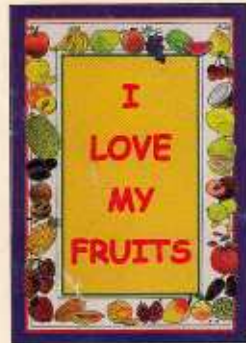
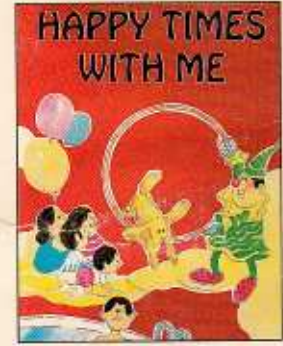
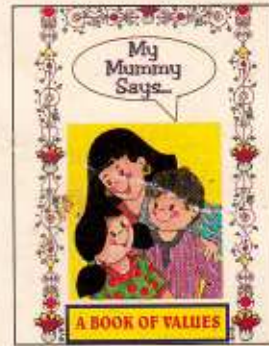
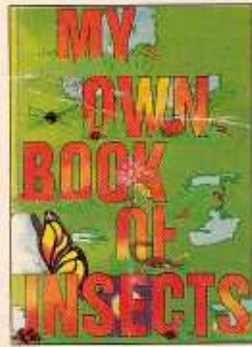
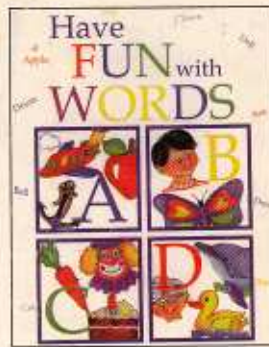
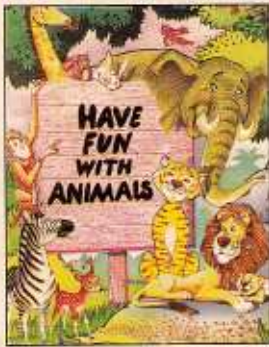


Make and colour Christmas and New Year cards.

Design your own gift wrapping paper.



Our Titles



BRIGHTSPARKS
FROM **TATA** DONNELLEY LIMITED